

### WHAT IS OUR COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION FOR?

I have just received a circular letter from Rev. H. Waddell Pratt, which has started anew some thoughts I have had before, and I am going to put them down for the earnest consideration of my brethren. Mr. Pratt is asking us all to subscribe for a volume of sermons from the pen of Dr. Strickler. The sermons are to be published as soon as a certain number of subscribers has been obtained. He now lacks only 200 subscribers. I rejoice in all this. I am glad that Dr. Strickler is going to publish his sermons. I am glad that Mr. Pratt is giving some of his fine energy and enthusiasm to such a good cause. I am glad to have an opportunity to subscribe for such a book and have subscribed long ago. But the whole transaction has raised in my mind the question that stands at the head of this letter. What is our Publication Committee for?

Dr. Strickler is probably the most influential minister in our Church. He is a great preacher. Is it necessary for some friend of his to secure enough subscribers to guarantee all expenses before our committee will publish the volume? Mr. Pratt's letter says that the manuscript is ready for the press. Why doesn't our committee take the manuscript and read it. If it is not worthy of publication why not frankly say so? If it is worthy why not publish it and then push its sale with vigor. I am sure that any book published by Dr. Strickler will pay all expenses and more too, if properly advertised. Is our Church running a book store or a publication house?

This is an extreme case, but it illustrates a policy in our Church which I believe is absolutely wrong. Every Church ought to do what she can to build up a literature of her own. Look at the Presbyterian Church in Scotland. What a wonderful literature she has, and her ministers today are really supplying the whole Christian world with religious literature, ranging from the most scholarly works on criticism and theology to the sweetest books of devotion. Frequently we see objections to these books in our Church papers. Some of them are rather liberal in their theology. But where else can we turn for Presbyterian books? We are making very few ourselves. We must have books. They will probably grow more liberal as the years go by. We ought to build up a literature of our own. If I understand the original purpose of our committee it was called into existence for this very work. But I would like to ask how long it will take to develop a literature of our own under the present policy of our committee? When the leading men in the Church have to guarantee all expenses or get some friend to secure enough subscriptions to cover expenses before our committee will touch a book. What encouragement is there for a less prominent man to write? Of course it would be utterly impossible for the committee to publish unconditionally every manuscript submitted to them. A great deal is not worth publishing. But let each manuscript be read by three competent men who are paid for such services. Let those men answer frankly two questions: Is this a book the Church ought to have? Is it probable that by good advertisement we can sell enough copies

to pay expenses? The answers to those two questions ought to be a sufficient guide to the committee. If books by some of our own men were as vigorously advertised as books by some outsiders they would have a larger circulation. I readily admit that our ministers can not yet compete in book-writing with our Scotch brethren. That is perfectly obvious to every one who reads. But if they are properly encouraged in one or two generations we will have many writers of whom we will not be ashamed. It is my honest conviction that there is no Church of any consequence anywhere which is giving as little encouragement to her ministers and writers to build up a literature as our own Church. I believe this can all be changed by a slight change of policy on the part of our committee. Let the committee give all possible encouragement to the men who are willing to write. I believe they might go further and suggest to some of the promising men of the Church that they prepare themselves to write books on certain themes. Some of the best writers of modern times have been discovered.

I write all this with a high appreciation of the splendid work our committee is doing. What I write is not intended so much as a criticism as a suggestion. I firmly believe that we ought to change our policy on this point. We need more than a book store. We need a publishing house.

Walter L. Lingle.

### AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE.

The word "College" has a variant significance, depending on the character and the extent of the course of study. A hundred years ago the best colleges in the land offered a course of study that was not very much superior to that of the High Schools of the present day. In all our first class colleges the requirements for admission have lately been advanced and the curriculum has been advanced very greatly.

Meanwhile a large number of institutions have been started, which (perhaps by force of circumstances) have not undertaken the advanced course of study. And yet they carry the same name and are known as colleges.

Within the last forty years, a similar change has been going on in the colleges for women. Vassar and Smith, Bryn Mawr and Mount Holyoke have led the way in establishing a course of study for women equal to the advanced course of the colleges for men.

In the South, by reason of the financial limitations consequent on the losses of the war, this movement has been slower. At the present, between the Potomac and the Mississippi, we know of only two institutions for women that maintain this standard. One is Randolph Macon Woman's College at Lynchburg, and the other is the Agnes Scott College, at Decatur, six miles east of Atlanta.

Agnes Scott commenced twenty years ago as a High School for Girls. During the past six years an additional course of study has been arranged each year, so that students who had finished the academic course could go right forward with a college course.

But the expense of a college department always exceeds and greatly exceeds the tuition fees. The demand is for professors who can command high sal-